English Democrats Party

Constitution

Version 2.2

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Being Version 2.0 updated with name change to English Democrats Party

1 Introduction

Name

1.1 The party shall be called the "English Democrats Party"

Constitution

1.2 The Constitution of the English Democrats Party sets out how the Party will regulate its activities so that its actions and policies reflect the will of the members of the Party and are in accordance with regulatory requirements and general standards of propriety and regularity.

1.3 The members of the Party must approve, by ballot, the Constitution of the English Democrats Party and any amendments to it. The National Council may make interim amendments to the constitution where the National Conference explicitly delegates authority for this; all such amendments must be subsequently approved by the members or lapse. Approval of amendments must be by at least a 50% majority of those voting.

Manifesto

1.4 The aims and objectives of the English Democrats Party are contained in its manifesto. The National Council is responsible for developing the manifesto and it is for the Conference to accept or reject it in its entirety.

Policy

1.5 The day-to-day adoption and amendment of Party policy shall be the responsibility of the National Council. All such policy shall conform with and give expression to the aims and objectives of the Party as set out in its Manifesto.

2 Objectives and Methods

Objectives

2.1 The English Democrats Party's principal objectives shall be:

- to build a more democratic and accountable society;
- to secure a parliament and executive (government) for England;
- to gain sufficient electoral support to form the executive (government) of England.
- to advocate and put into effect the aims and objectives set out in its manifesto.

Methods

2.2 The English Democrats Party shall pursue its aims by means of political activity, democratically organised by members of the party freely associating together according to the provisions of the constitution.

3 Membership

3.1 Membership of the Party is open to all UK citizens, aged 16 years or over, who broadly agree with its aims, objectives, and policies.

3.2 Membership can be acquired by anyone, whatever their ethnicity, religion or culture, who:

a) has affirmed in writing his or her intention to join the English Democrats Party;

b) is willing to further the aims of the party;

c) is not a member of any political party or body contesting elections in opposition to the English Democrats Party;

d) agrees to bide by the Constitution and Standing Orders of the party;

e) has been accepted into membership by the National Council;

f) has paid the annual membership fee, as determined from time to time by the National Council.

3.3 The National Council shall have the right to expel from membership any person who no longer complies with the requirements of paragraph 3.1, or whose behaviour is otherwise damaging to the interests of the party. Any member so expelled shall have the right of appeal to the Appeals Panel.

3.4 Not withstanding compliance with 3.1 above, membership may be refused or revoked if there is material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the fundamental values and objectives of the party or admission or continued membership would be likely to bring the party into disrepute.

3.5 Any person aggrieved by such a refusal or revocation shall, subject to having exhausted the internal procedures have a right of appeal to the Appeals Panel.

4 National Conference

4.1 The Conference shall be responsible for:

a) approving the party's manifesto;
b) electing the Party Chairman
c) electing ten members of the National Council;
d) approving the Treasurer's Report; and
e) appointing the members of the Appeals Panel.

4.2 The Conference shall consist of:

a) all Members of the National Council;
b) representatives of Area Councils as established by the National Council;
c) ordinary members of the party

4.3 The conference shall be convened and conducted in accordance with the Conference Standing orders.

5 The National Council

5.1 The National Council shall be responsible for:

a) developing the policies of the party in depth;
b) determining the party's strategies and tactics;
c) preparing the party's election manifestos;
d) electing from among its members the Treasurer and Secretary;
e) ensuring that proper arrangements are made for the Party Conference;
f) ensuring that proper arrangements are made for the election of the Party Leader;
g) implementing any decisions which the Conference has directed to it.

5.2 The National Council shall cause to be drawn up and maintained, as and when required, the following sets of Standing Orders and rules:

a) Standing Orders for the National Council;
b) Standing Orders for the National Council Executive;
c) Standing Orders and rules for Branches and Area Councils;
d) financial rules;
e) rules for the selection of the National Council
f) rules for the selection of Westminster Parliamentary candidates;
g) rules for the selection of local government candidates
h) rules for the selection of European Parliamentary candidates; and

i) rules for the selection of House of Lords candidates

5.3 Meetings of the National Council shall be conducted in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council.

5.4 Membership of the National Council (between 11 to 20 in number) shall be:

a) the Party Chairman and ten members elected at Conference;

b) nine Area representatives, Areas being European Parliament constituencies, as and when Areas are formed.

5.5 Members elected to the National Council shall serve for a term of two years.

6 Executive officers and groups

6.1 The National Council may appoint, as it see fit, such officers or working groups to further the objectives of the party, this may include:

a) implementing the decisions of the Conference and the National Council;

b) organising and directing national campaigns;

c) managing the organisation and finance of the party;

d) developing policies;

e) managing the party's assets.

6.2 The roles of the Officers shall be as follows unless Standing Orders, or legal requirements, or a decision of the National Council, directs otherwise.

a) The Party Chairman shall be responsible for chairing all meetings of the Party.

b) Secretary: All official communications to and from the Party shall be through the Secretary who will keep copies of all correspondence and make it available to members of the National Council.

c) The Treasurer shall manage the party's national finances and undertake such duties as required by the Financial scheme agreed with the Electoral Commission.

7 Area Councils

7.1 The powers and roles of Area Councils shall be determined by the National Council.

8 Resolution of Conflicts

8.1 There shall be an Appeals Panel for the English Democrats Party, which shall consist of three members elected by the National Conference. Members of the Appeals Panel shall not also be members of the National Council or the National Council Executive.

8.2 The Appeals Panel shall adjudicate on:

a) any dispute over the interpretation of these Articles;

b) any claim that the rights under these Articles of a member or of a Party body have been infringed, provided that no appeal may be brought under this paragraph where there is another appeal procedure;

c) any matter expressly so provided by these Articles or by rules made hereunder.

8.3 The Panel may make and publish rules for its own procedure.

8.4 Any decision of the Panel shall be applied by all concerned provided it is considered and supported by the National Council. If the National Council does not support the decision of the Panel, the decision shall be referred to the members of the English Democrats Party for ratification. The decision of the members is final and binding.

Standing orders of the National Council

1. A quorum shall be formed by 4 or more of the members, as they are defined in the constitution of the English Democrats Party.
2. The Chair shall be taken by the Chairman or in his/her absence, the meeting shall elect an acting Chair from amongst those present.

Financial rules

1. All bank accounts of the English Democrats Party shall be subject to the authority of the National Council and shall only be opened or closed by resolution of the National Council. Bank mandates shall be approved at a meeting of the National Council. Authorised signatories on cheques, standing orders, direct debits etc shall always include the person, normally the Treasurer, denoted at the time by the National Council to be responsible for keeping the party's accounts.

2 The financial year of the English Democrats Party will be from 1 January to 31 December.

3 The National Council will cause annual financial accounts to be prepared within 4 months of the end of the financial year and for these financial reports to be audited.

4. No paid employment or contract for the supply of goods or services shall be awarded on behalf of the English Democrats Party except by a person or persons authorised for that purpose by the National Council. No such appointment or contract may be awarded to any member of the immediate family of a member of the National Council or to any company in which such a person has a financial interest.

5. The Treasurer's reports to the National Council must be written and include details of the party's bank accounts and income and expenditure in the format approved by the National Council.

6. The Treasurer shall present to the annual conference a financial statement that shall include a statement of income and expenditure for the previous financial year and a balance sheet for the end of that year, both in a format drawn up by the National Council.

7. The National Council shall agree, annually, to a budget showing the projected income and expenditure for the party in a format agreed by the National Council from time to time.